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ABSTRACT

As states transfer more responsibility for education decisions to local school systems, effective leadership at the local level is essential. This report presents the Southern Regional Educational Board (SREB) model for leadership development, as practiced by the SREB Leadership Academy. Since 1991, teams from 12 school systems in the southern United States were selected to attend a series of 3-day training sessions each year over a period of 4 years. The leadership-development model is built on four strategies: working on real-world goals; developing a personal plan for professional development; coaching and mentoring; and building community collaboration. Course content focuses on the areas of planning, systems design, group dynamics, and enrichment. Appendices contain lists of team participants, and information on SREB program evaluation and project administrators. (LMI)

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Making Leadership Happen

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THE SREB MODEL FOR LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

SOUTHERN REGIONAL EDUCATION BOARD

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NationsBank

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"We can develop leaders, and we know how to do it."

Unfortunately, most people don't seem to agree that leadership is developed. Our nation's business leaders do, but many of the persons who make decisions about the future of our states and our education systems don't seem to agree, judged by the actions they take.

"Leadership is not something that happens at conception, but it is developed and can be taught. Today we know more about how to prepare persons to lead organizations, including schools, than ever before." So says Alton Crews, a veteran educator with more than 30 years' experience as a superintendent and director of the SREB Leadership Academy.

Alton Crews understands that educators need the kind of professional development accepted in the corporate world. They need exposure to instructional approaches that will help all children learn. They need a forum to brainstorm coordinated solutions to complex problems like low reading levels and high dropout rates. They need to learn their personal leadership styles and how they can be more effective.

This report presents the SREB model for leadership development, a product of years of pilot-testing and refining the best strategies for helping educators become good leaders. As the SREB states transfer more responsibility for education decisions to local schools and school systems, effective leadership at the local level becomes essential. States will make a big mistake if they shift authority to schools without building in ways to develop leadership capacity in those schools. We hope that this report and the SREB Leadership Academy can develop this leadership.

Mark D. Musick, President
Southern Regional Educational Board

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The Outward Bound seminar helps district teams learn to solve problems by consensus, share authority and resolve conflicts productively.

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Making Leadership Happen

THE SREB MODEL FOR LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

By Alton C. Crews and Sonya Weakley

FOREWORD

Colleagues discuss how to use new instructional approaches in their district.

In a conference room at a rural Georgia retreat, casually dressed principals, assistant principals, central office administrators, teachers, superintendents, board members and school supporters face each other in a large circle. They come from different communities, different states, different backgrounds. They know each other only from the training sessions they have been attending together. Today, as they sit down to sip their morning coffee, hard issues slap them in the face.

Is it our job as educators to teach students to fit into a mold? To be conformists? Should we teach them to be thinkers? Are we then teaching them to be rebels? Is there a clash between your sense of what you think you should teach and what society says you should teach? In looking to the legacy of Martin Luther King, is there a difference in human prejudices? Have they diminished? Gone in different directions? Are they still with us? Do you see prejudice in your schools?

Well?

These school leaders are participating in "Leaders of Humanity," a seminar that has been widely used in the corporate sector to develop leaders' awareness of the importance of integrity. They are being asked, cajoled, even shamed a little into opening their minds and souls to each other on topics they might never discuss with anyone other than their closest friends. Seminar leader Zygmunt Nagorski, president of the Center for International Leadership in Washington DC, is raising these questions—and many others just as pointed—based on readings the participants were assigned in advance. The participants, however, aren't quite prepared for this examination of their values and the impact of those values upon their leadership styles.

Energy grows. Tension rises. Tempers flare. Honesty prevails.

"It's easier to teach conformity because that's how we grew up."

"We should teach thinkers who can learn to rebel within the system."

"I don't believe we've made progress in race relations. Racism is as bad as ever in schools."

"No, it isn't. Young people are more tolerant today."

"How can you say that? Older children start self-segregating in about the eighth grade. Everything is either a white thing or it is a black thing."

"This discussion makes me uncomfortable."

Hands twitch. Eyes dart toward the door. Is there a way to escape confronting these issues? To return to the comfort of the daily school routine? Is it really important to share personal feelings on these sensitive subjects in the process of learning how to be better leaders?

It is, according to school leaders who are participating in the Southern Regional Education Board's Leadership Academy. Under the direction of veteran educator Alton C. Crews, The Leadership Academy is bringing Southern school leaders together to participate in a demonstration project that offers a fresh approach to the development of educational leaders based largely on corporate leadership training philosophies.

"Public schools will not be turned around until those who lead them view schools and their roles from a

different frame of reference," Crews says. "We must have risk-taking, change-agent school administrators who can lead communities to adopt better ways to deliver educational services to children."

With primary support from NationsBank, SREB established the Leadership Academy in 1990 to demonstrate that structured leadership training can help turn public school systems around by improving leadership skills and attitudes, and by preparing local school leaders to be held accountable for school improvement. But to have tangible consequences, this training must be structured according to the setting of important educational goals and continuous effort to reach them.

"The behaviors, attitudes, values, and skills of those who lead schools must change for schools to improve," Crews says.

The objective of the Southern Regional Education Board's project is to produce a prototype leadership development program that can be disseminated to its member states, offering them the opportunity to incorporate all or part of the program into their current leadership development activities. In Georgia, 13 school systems are already participating in an adaptation of the program supported by the Woodruff Foundation.

As a means of developing its program, SREB used a competitive application process to select 12 school systems from the 15 SREB states for the prototype Academy. A class of four school systems was chosen to begin the program in 1992, 1993 and 1995. The systems sent five-member teams to work together and attend a series of three-day training programs each year over a period of four years. Each school district works to achieve a set of goals over a period of five years.

Through the Leadership Academy, school leaders are exposed to innovative and exciting ideas, philosophies, programs, processes, and people. They interact with other school leaders from all parts of the region who are facing similar challenges and issues as they work with respected national education and business consultants.

Unlike any leadership development program currently available in the SREB states, the SREB Leadership Academy takes a comprehensive, integrated approach that is long-term, team-oriented, and relies upon specific strategies aimed at developing the individual and the community, as well as the school district. SREB's practical method employs four separate but interdependent strategies:

- Goal-setting linked with interactive training seminars;
- Building a personal plan of professional improvement;
- Non-judgmental coaching and mentoring;
- Community collaboration and partnership building.

School teams explore left- and right-brained learning styles in the 4MAT Curriculum Development Seminar.

District teams from across the region share ideas and strategic plans as they tackle their own educational improvement goals.

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Teams Working on Real-World Goals

Jim Wilhelm, division director for high schools in Winston-Salem/Forsyth County, North Carolina, describes the Academy as "four-dimensional training. The goal-setting, vision statements, the importance of reflective thinking, the quality of the presenters and their standing offer of feedback—the whole program fits together." The Leadership Academy has been designed in keeping with SREB's long practice of setting regional educational goals and benchmarking progress toward them, a strategy for encouraging educational improvement highlighted in the 1988 publication of *Goals for Education: Challenge 2000*.

Each system selected to participate in the SREB Leadership Academy must set one to three significant goals that are lofty, results-based, measurable, and aimed at improving student productivity. These goals ensure that the participants' development of an effective leadership style will have a direct impact on their schools and students. The goals themselves should be geared to results, to improving K-12 educational achievement in the district, but not to upgrading operations like food or bus services.

"Clearly defined goals tend to unify an organization's efforts," Crews says. "Goals help minimize the tendency of loosely coupled organizations, such as public schools, to fragment their efforts and squander resources."

Participating teams have selected a variety of goals focused on school improvement:

- All children will be ready for the first grade;
- All students will earn a high school diploma or complete an individualized education plan;
- We will demonstrate a 10 percent increase in the performance of all students on 30 output performance measures set by the state education agency;
- Four of five high school graduates will be ready for college and will not require remedial courses.

"The best way to train change-agent leaders is on the job, tackling live problems, seeking to achieve specific goals."

Alton Crews

Goal-setting also gives teams a real-world context in which to think about leadership. Even if teams do not reach their goals, they learn about the kind of leadership necessary to tackle challenges.

The process of applying to participate in the Leadership Academy was helpful to one district. "In that process, we were asked to set a vision for ourselves and for our school district—what we wanted to accomplish—and to quantify it," says B. L. Davis, former superintendent of the Carrollton/Farmer's Branch school district in Texas. "We did, and the fact that we went through the process of setting a vision for the district, setting goals, and quantifying how we were going to accomplish them—that in itself, whether we were selected or not, was important and of value to us."

Davis says that the process helped bring unity to the district. "The fact that our principals, our teachers, our community knew that we had gone into this endeavor, they knew what that vision was, and they knew that we were focused on it—that helped us with the budget. It helped us with planning. When we sat down with our principals or the PTA, we would say this is a commitment we've made; it's important. They wanted our district to be successful and they bought into it."

The goals that school systems choose during their participation in the Leadership Academy are a key factor in determining the impact the Academy training has on students in the classroom.

"The way we went about setting our goals contributed to what's taking place in terms of student learning," says Dianne Lane, superintendent of the Columbia County, Florida, school system. "We set three district-wide goals that affected three different levels of our schools. We set our goals to impact all students from pre-kindergarten to high school."

While participating in the Academy, each school system's progress toward meeting the goals must be documented annually, based on benchmark data from the date the goals were set by school board resolution.

"Goal-setting requires you to focus on aspects of your system that really need to be addressed," says Bill Lawson, high school principal in Temple, Texas.

"The process of goal-setting tells you where you're going," says Carol T. Lee, former school board member in Richland County, South Carolina. "It helps focus everyone's attention and to be more accountable for how we spend our time."

Participants also say that setting goals helps the teams stay focused on specific issues. "The Leadership Academy provided the format and the structure we needed to constantly keep the goal in front of us each time we met, and to plan around that goal," says Larry Coble, former superintendent in Winston-Salem/Forsyth County, North Carolina. "Determining what those next steps are going to be, and following up is essential."

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Setting goals ties the seminar training directly to the real issues at home. "One very significant thing that has come out of the Leadership Academy has been our Strategic Direction Initiative Program," says Brenda Gentry, instructional generalist from Winston Salem/Forsyth County. "It is about knowing who your customers are and meeting the needs of those customers, having your guiding principles, your goals. We have a focus now as a school system. We know what we're about, and that came directly from the Leadership Academy."

As a result of participation in the Leadership Academy, each school in Winston-Salem/Forsyth County must submit a strategic plan, and a district assistant has been hired to oversee that process. Each school states its goals regarding such issues as safety, operating environment, quality, diversity, and unity and develops its own improvement plan.

PROFILE

LEARNING TO WORK TOGETHER

Five years ago, Marijo Pitts-Sheffield didn't know a single name at the local health department or family and children's services agency. Today, her Glynn County, Georgia, district is working jointly with several agencies to provide a range of services for preschool children and their families.

At about the time that Glynn County was chosen for the Leadership Academy, Georgia began funding pre-kindergarten programs for schools and for home instruction. Both initiatives required cooperation among agencies. Glynn County took advantage of the training on learning to work together provided through the Leadership Academy.

"That's how we began looking at how we were going to pull everybody together," says Pitts-Sheffield, who is both the early childhood and the Partners in Education director in her district.

The district began with a pre-kindergarten coordinating council of more than 40 people from such agencies as mental health, family and children services, housing and Social Security. The council also included representatives from the Georgia Extension Service, the local hospital (a major employer), private pre-kindergarten centers, the local college and the Chamber of Commerce.

"That was another piece that SREB helped us understand that we needed—to have the business population behind us."

Pitts-Sheffield says the group recently realized it was spending too much time meeting and setting up committees, and it began looking into ways to change this. "We did not have just the worker bees from these agencies. We had the CEO or director, the decision-makers—and we found that was important—but their time is limited."

The group applied for a planning grant from a private organization called the Family Connection. "We decided to use that as a tool to look at what we were doing to see if we could kick it up to the next level of collaboration, where you're actually sharing funds."

The group received the grant and hired an executive director and a University of Georgia consultant specializing in organizational conflict management. The task of these employees is to set up a system that will allow families and children to access all the cooperating services from one office, Pitts-Sheffield says.

"The whole idea is that instead of a family being bombarded with a case worker from each agency, there would be one point of entry into the system. There would be a case manager who would coordinate those services so the family wouldn't have so many different people knocking at its door."

"If we're really cooperating, and if the case workers are comparable in skills and competencies, there should be a level of trust such that if one agency's person is working with a family, the other agencies can trust that person's abilities and judgments. That's pretty futuristic."

PROFILE

A UNIFYING FORCE

Julia Symmonds, president of the school board in Temple, Texas, believes the SREB Leadership Academy has mobilized her team to carry a unified message to her district and get things done to help students.

"The most important part has been the building of the team," Symmonds says. "We go to the Leadership Academy sessions and get away from the district. We get away from the distractions. We learn. Our conversation doesn't stop when the seminar stops. It carries on into dinner. It carries on into the evening, and on the plane trip going back."

The energy continues to grow after the team returns home, she says.

Working as a Team

"Leaders must be strong not only at the top, but at all levels." —Alton Crews

Each participating school system chooses its own management team of administrators and teachers from all levels to attend the Leadership Academy. Led by the superintendent, the team takes responsibility for achievement of the system's goals and then designs, guides and implements the strategies to achieve them. This approach strengthens the link between the training and the workplace.

"I'm hoping any skills I learn on the team will reach other faculty members," says Harvey Dailey, a high school principal in Spartanburg, South Carolina. "If you can affect the faculty, you will have a direct effect on the student body. If you've got good leadership at the top, it will multiply itself out, especially when you're involving a school team that includes teachers. The team will be able to make an overall difference in the school."

Through the Leadership Academy, Mattie Broadnax, an assistant high school principal from Newport News, Virginia, had the opportunity to participate for the first time on a "vertical" management team. "I'm grateful for the opportunity to work side by side with the superintendent," says Broadnax.

Working as a team and setting goals can make changes possible that may not have occurred otherwise. For example, one district whose goal is to increase the number of pre-kindergarten children served by the district, has developed a plan to meet that goal sooner than expected.

"I really don't feel [this program] would be at this stage of discussion without the type of opportunities the team had in working together," says Bill Anderson, former superintendent in Des Moines, Iowa, who participates as a team coach. "By sitting down together and having this representative team, which has teachers and the superintendent and intermediate leaders all working toward this stated and avowed goal—it's amazing what things can be done when people have a clear direction of what they want to do."

Team members support and rely upon each other as they develop trust and confidence in their own abilities to bring change to the district. "The people on our team grew individually and were able to work together and be risk takers, and not always settle for the status quo," says Marijo Pitts-Sheffield, early childhood director in Glynn County, Georgia. "It has given us a lot of confidence that I'm not sure we would have if we hadn't been through the Academy."

Pulling a team together from many parts of the community also helps build credibility and support for the goals among diverse school and community groups, says Lee of Richland County, South Carolina. "It has helped build relationships among people from different parts of the district," she says. "The team became pretty close, and that helped build support within the community for the project. Our relationships helped us to find ways to funnel to the district some of the information we gained at the Leadership Academy."

Lawson of Temple, Texas, says his team formed a strong bond that has been "extremely valuable. Having to work together not only at Academy meetings but on a monthly basis has certainly improved communication, and this has been transferred into our schools."

Julia Symmonds, chair of the school board in Temple, Texas, says that team solidarity may have been the most important factor in causing change. "The unity of the team is probably the thing that has gotten the most things done because we can present a unified front when we get back to the district. We can say this is something we really want to do and we think it's going to help the kids."

Milly Cowles, dean emeritus of the College of Education at the University of Alabama and a peer coach for the Lake City, Florida, team, says teams provide participants with "something they all can discuss and grow with rather than one person going to an institute in California and one going to an institute in New York, and trying to mesh those."

Cowles, who participates in the Academy as a coach, says working in teams "makes it possible for people to have a common core for growth back home, but it takes a long time. My own observation is that it takes 10 years, but I've been involved in groups through the years where I've not seen the kind of growth that I've seen in this project."

In addition to support within each team, the networking among participants also reinforces the goal-setting process as teams share their experiences at each seminar. "The fact that you get a chance to interact with all kinds of people from other school systems who have so many things in common with you is so important," Broadnax says. "We have grown as a group, and I think that's pretty unique."

Dailey appreciates the support and information he gets from interaction with other class members. "I look forward to just getting back together with the other people in the class and hearing some of the things that they've got going, and some of the problems we share, no matter whether we're in Texas or South Carolina or Virginia."

Lane of Columbia County, Florida, values the contacts she has made. "The interaction we've had with the representatives from other districts—they've absolutely given us a wealth of ideas, contact people and resources."

In Richland County, South Carolina, the class interaction inspired the development of a parent handbook that includes information about the schools and the district. "The handbook was a direct result of seeing a similar kind of publication that one of the other teams had," Lee says. "It impacts the students because it impacts the parents."

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Interactive Seminar Training

"To be agents of change, school leaders must know how to set meaningful goals, measure success, alter procedures based on results, and invest money where it matters. These leaders are not born. Leadership skills can be taught and learned." —Alton Crews

Drawing upon corporate training models, the SREB Leadership Academy provides highly skilled, nationally known professionals who deliver training to the teams in a long-term, comprehensive package that helps teams develop leadership skills over time. Participants read books and articles prior to each seminar to help them prepare for the content.

"Being exposed to the same style of leadership training that IBM senior managers are exposed to is excellent," Coble says.

"We met with several renowned speakers that gave me insights that I wouldn't have typically gotten as a superintendent," says Davis.

Participants also say that businesses in their districts appreciate the type of training that the school leaders receive through the Leadership Academy. "The training we're going through and the way we're going through it is what business looks for and how business goes about training people, as opposed to how educators are trained," says Lane. "Our Chamber of Commerce director is on the team and he has helped us see that we're doing what business expects of our students."

Instructors, acting as facilitators, guide participants through sessions that have a collegial tone and encourage continuous interaction. They are encouraged to express ideas and share real life experiences. They disagree. They debate. They take from the session what is most appropriate to their school systems and apply it to their systems' challenges.

"The Leadership Academy has given us a more personal training experience," Lane says. "This is experiential. It's not just lecture, and it is internalized within us as a result." She sites the "Leaders of Humanity" seminar as having a profound effect upon attitudes that drive leadership behavior. "Zyg Nagorski was absolutely phenomenal in not only making you think hard about what you believe in, but also in examining what motivates you, and at what point you might be willing to give up the principles you thought you held so tightly," Lane says. "He helps you see how firmly you do hold to the principles you have and what actually drives your leadership decisions. He was really good at finding those little buttons to push."

Four general content areas are covered during the seminars or modules. "The modules are the curriculum content of our program," Crews says. "We will make them available to the states, and they can pick those that best fit their needs."

Participants say the content of the training sessions applies directly to their systems' challenges. For example, a session on developing a marketing plan for schools "truly opened our eyes about how closely we parallel a business," says Broadnax.

The Columbia County, Florida, team has applied the 4MAT training in the schools, Lane says. "We felt it was really beneficial to staff not only in thinking about the way kids learn, but thinking about each other's personalities and how they might be more effective in working together."

The Winston-Salem/Forsyth County team was able to apply information from a training session on strategic planning to its district plan. That district is also using the personal leadership course for district training and has applied the 4MAT curriculum development model.

The Temple, Texas, team has found ways to apply almost every training session it attended. "There has been very, very direct spin-off," says Lawson. "It's not like a vague kind of thing where we're using some ideas. We're actually taking the content and putting it to work directly in the schools."

These content areas and modules make up the Leadership Academy training.

PLANNING

Participants receive training in use of measurement tools such as goal-setting, benchmarking, team vision building, feedback, and assessment.

Modules

- Strategic Planning
- Site-Based School Management
- Results-Based School Management
- Developing a Marketing Plan
- Total Quality Management

SYSTEMS DESIGN

Participants receive specific instruction in planning school improvements.

Modules

- Building a Comprehensive Technology Plan
- Organizing a Comprehensive Staff Development Plan
- Developing a Community Human Services Collaborative
- Implementing the 4MAT Curriculum Development System
- Restructuring Schools for the 21st Century

GROUP DYNAMICS/ INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

These sessions focus on team-building strategies.

Modules

- Transformational Leadership
- Conflict Resolution
- Team Building
- Developing Personal Leadership Skills
- Valuing Diversity in the Workplace
- Consensus Building
- Outward Bound Programs
- Problem Analysis and Decision-making
- Interpersonal Skill Building
- Communicating for Results

ENRICHMENT

Participants study the significance of values and ethics for leadership and learn to understand and work within their own organizational cultures. They explore the impact of global, national, regional, economic, demographic, technological, environmental and political trends on their school systems.

Modules

- Leaders of Humanity: Human Values and Ethics
- Cultural Enrichment: Demographics, Political Issues, Economics and Technology

For example, Temple also has implemented the 4MAT curriculum development model throughout the district. "That was a very valuable, productive session," he says. Lawson adds that "We're now using Phil Schlechty's work with our curriculum coordinator. The personal leadership workshop was done for all administrators in the district, and those administrators took it back and implemented it at the school level."

Symmonds, also from Temple, sites the 4MAT training as being especially beneficial. "We really bought into the 4MAT training, and we think that is going to be one of the biggest helps. The old method of standing up there and lecturing for 50 minutes isn't going to work anymore. We had the whole high school staff trained in 4MAT. More than 40 people took the training. We really feel like that is going to be crucial to our district."

She says the team found the workshop on personal leadership to be inspiring. "We feel that is a different leadership style than most people have. Everybody had seen books on leadership style and prioritizing, but to be able to teach it and get it down through the system has been really beneficial. It's a different way of looking at how you treat everybody—not each other but the students also—and how to create win-win situations."

In general, Symmonds believes that the training content, combined with the teamwork, is an excellent tool for tackling the real issues in the district. She says, "The things that we have picked up directly influence the students and the way they feel about themselves, and therefore they are able to learn."

Participants discuss the relationship between their personal leadership styles and their roles as team members.

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A Personal Plan for Professional Improvement

The SREB Leadership Academy encourages each participant to develop a personal plan for professional improvement. Each team member undergoes an analysis of his or her leadership style using a computerized assessment. The participant answers a self-evaluation questionnaire that is compared to evaluations prepared by peers and colleagues at different levels.

"Most leaders have a dominant style and tend to use it in all settings," Crews says. "Researchers tell us that leadership style must vary with circumstances. The wise leader alters style to fit conditions."

The results from the analysis are compared to a benchmark profile of a highly effective leader. Each team member uses this information to develop a personal plan of improvement. Participants then assess their improvement when the questionnaire is used a second time at the end of the program.

"This assessment is wonderful," says Symmonds. "It gives you so much insight into yourself and your leadership style. Ours were amazingly accurate—they hit the nail on the head—it was uncanny. It makes you think about how you deal with people. When I approach people now, I think about different ways of looking at things. I know where my strengths are and where my weaknesses are."

The assessment also provides necessary feedback. "It allows you to see how others perceive your performance," Coble says, "and really paves the road for goal setting for professional development."

"Effective leaders strive to be better at their jobs tomorrow than they are today. They are lifelong learners. To succeed, one should engage in an overt plan of personal improvement."

Alton Crews

"Leaders who refuse to carefully examine their underlying assumptions are doomed to repeat past failures and get the results they have always gotten. Reflection on one's decisions, successes, failures and interactions with significant others is a powerful learning tool that shapes values, beliefs and behavior."

Alton Crews

Teams investigate how a district's leadership can make a difference to students.

A peer coach is assigned to each team and plays a key role in the development of each participant's personal plan of improvement. When the coach visits the team's district, he or she spends a day meeting individually with team members, reviewing the written plans of improvement the participants have developed using the results of the leadership profiles.

"Evidence shows people do not change unless they have someone with whom they can share what they're doing," Crews says. "Most people don't feel comfortable sharing with the person who evaluates their performance. The presence of a peer coach as a mentor—and a reliable, trustworthy mentor—is very important in the process of developing a personal plan of improvement."

To many participants, undergoing the assessment is a startling experience. "I took the leadership assessment, and I'm still trying to recover," says Dailey of Spartanburg. "It told me what I didn't want to know, but what I probably already knew. As we've been told, we have to deal with the perceptions people have of us more than the perceptions we have of ourselves. That's been an eye-opener."

Lane, of Columbia County, Florida, says the assessment profile keeps her aware of how she handles situations. "I've used the information to more actively try to force myself out of my comfort zone and put myself in different kinds of experiences or in the same experiences in a different way."

The profile is not a prescription for success, but it does offer participants an insight into their typical strategies for responding to people and situations. That insight can pave the way for personal transformation. "Seeing how others view me was interesting," says Lee of Richland County, South Carolina. "I do think it made me change."

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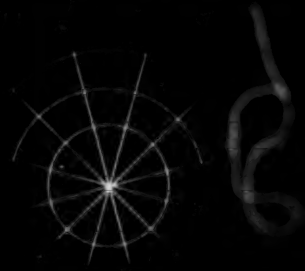
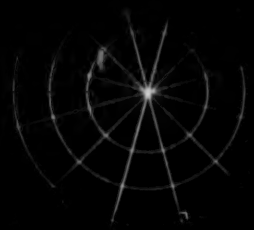
ACUMEN is designed to help managers understand themselves and their personal development needs, and it provides suggestions to help them develop behaviors that result in more effective management styles. ACUMEN focuses on helping managers understand how their personal characteristics and motivations influence their management styles. If leaders recognize personal thinking patterns, they can change counterproductive patterns and strengthen effective ones.

Academy participants pop an ACUMEN disk into their personal computers and respond to phrases about how well they match 124 management style descriptions. In addition, each participant is also assessed by his or her colleagues on the same items. The results of the assessments generate a score on each of 12 thinking styles key to managers. Through these assessments, and the resulting ACUMEN profile, participants can develop specific plans to develop their own optimal management styles.

MOST EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP STYLE



INEFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP STYLE



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Keeping a Reflective Learning Journal

Using the leadership profile as a guide, participants keep a diary, or reflective learning journal, as part of their self-assessment, and make regular entries in it. Entries focus on a situation or event, the people involved, the action taken and the writer's reflections about the entire process. The journal's purpose is to prompt reflection so participants can recognize discrepancies between their intent and their actions and modify their behavior and practice over time.

"The journal is the most powerful thing I've done," says Jim Wilhelm, division director for high schools in Winston-Salem/Forsyth County, North Carolina. "The more you get into it, the deeper you get into yourself. It connects you with your inner self. It's very powerful. The writing has been the most valuable part of my experience with the Leadership Academy."

Wilhelm says the reflective learning journal forced him to think about every issue. "It puts you in a much more reflective mode. As a high school principal, I just said 'full steam ahead, ready, aim, fire. Don't think about it. If you mess up, worry about it the next day.' There is power in writing. I didn't realize how much power there is until I got into the Leadership Academy."

Davis says the journal writing helped him avoid unpleasant or unproductive situations. "I think anybody who's not willing to go back and look at themselves and ask why they do certain things is going to have serious problems down the road."

The process of keeping a journal is a self-development tool. By recording reflections and reviewing them with the peer coach, participants in the Academy can come to see themselves and others more objectively, and learn to communicate more clearly.

"In the final analysis, virtually all learning comes from personal experience and subsequent reflection on the experience," Crews says.

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Journals—A Key to Insight

These journal entries were written by Leadership Academy participants while they worked in their districts as superintendents, principals, teachers and school board and central staff members.

OCTOBER 8th

As a part of my plan to include more people in the decision-making process, I established a retreat that included the top people in the administration. The first two years I was superintendent in the district I generated the [plan] to jump start the district. My direction and a number of programs were started. Personnel were redirected and changed. I felt it was now time to begin to solidify changes made and to develop depth. I brought more people into the loop. The area most criticized in my evaluation by staff was the tendency to unilateral decision-making. I will try to overcome this.

A district superintendent

MARCH 3rd

We had the superintendent's evaluation this month. Things did not go well. I do feel that we gave one of the most fair and accurate accounts that we have given in years. Unfortunately, our good intentions left him upset and somewhat disturbed after hearing the results. Two meetings and a few phone calls later, he was able to sit down with the board and acknowledge his complacence of this past year. We were all very honest.

A school board member

FEBRUARY 9th

After reflecting on this incident, I wish that I had been more forceful when talking to this PTA parent/volunteer. I felt sorry for her due to the fact that she was sobbing. I wish that I had clarified in more depth her role and responsibilities as a parent so that this situation would not occur again. Hence, I would have reiterated what our PTA co-president had stated during our PTA Executive Board Meeting the previous day. In addition, she would have clearly known that there were several people (PTA officers, assistant principal, teachers, etc.) whom she had offended. Due to some negative publicity, I am sometimes overly concerned with how others perceive me.

A teacher

NOVEMBER 18th

I have mixed feelings about spelling bees and similar competitive events. I don't like the look of dejection which some of the non-winners have when they are eliminated. I sometimes question my own role when I reward the "winners" with a cash award. I've even contemplated giving each participant at least a dollar. On the other hand, we must try and help youngsters come to grips with the world as it is. We should help them to develop a sense of strong positive self-worth at the same time recognizing that they may not be "first." One of the strengths of cooperative learning when appropriately conducted is helping youngsters learn how to cooperate while engaged in competitive endeavors. I enjoyed being among the students and their parents and teachers. They were all so proud of what they had accomplished.

A principal

Bernice McCarthy, leader of the 4MAT seminar, helps teachers organize lessons around four distinct skills—experiencing, conceptualizing, experimenting and creating

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STRATEGY III

Coaching and Mentoring: Help Along the Way

"The job of the school leader is a messy business. School leaders' days are spent reacting to unanticipated problems in a frantic environment. The beleaguered school leader needs a support system. His or her job is often a lonely job."

Alton Crews

An external coach is assigned to each team based on compatibility with the system's goals. This skilled coach is a knowledgeable, veteran education leader who has demonstrated exemplary leadership skills. The coach serves as a technical advisor to the team as it pursues its goals, and of the individual members in their quest for personal improvement.

"When you think of our program's four basic components, you have to merge the personal plan of improvement and the team, or peer, coach," Crews says. "Those two components fuse into one. The peer coach has two roles."

The first is to provide technical assistance to the team and the district in developing the best strategies to meet the district's goals. The second is to collect information from leadership profiles, reflective learning journals and individual team members to help participants develop their plans for personal improvement. Team members share their leadership profiles and journal entries with the peer coach.

"For the peer coach to be effective he or she has to establish a bond with the team—a trust level, which is extremely important," says Anderson, who serves as peer coach to three teams participating in the Academy.

"Our coach knows us," says Broadnax, a member of the Newport News, Virginia, team coached by Anderson. "He knows our culture.

He knows our business community. He understands. Because of that he can be a successful coach. I think the coaching component is a plus."

She has called upon Anderson for personal as well as professional matters. "I value his opinion. He doesn't tell me what I want to hear. He tells me what I need to hear and that's why I can call him. I can speak to him in confidence. He'll help me through, and if he can't, he'll tell me where I can get help."

The coach attends training sessions with the team and visits members periodically in the home district. During the training sessions, the coach observes and advises team members about personal and team goals. Because the mentor is not part of the team's school system, he or she is not perceived as threatening or judgmental.

"We have two site visits a year, and I think those are particularly important for being able to develop that level of understanding," says Anderson. "Otherwise people are not going to be open with you either in regard to their district problems or certainly their own personal or professional problems."

Anderson says it is important that the peer coach maintain regular contact with the team, especially since the coach often lives many miles from the team's district.

"At least once a month, I send out a fax or memo to the team members, and I encourage them either to call or fax me if they have any problems, not just related to the SREB goals but in their own personal lives or professional work. And they do that after they establish that level of trust because so often, especially for the superintendents, there isn't anyone for them to really converse with in this way."

It is also important for the coach to be available without being intrusive. "I do everything possible to make certain that this is perceived as something that will be to their benefit rather than an imposition—an outsider coming in and taking up their valuable time," Anderson says.

Davis, whose Carrollton/Farmer's Branch team was also coached by Anderson, says the coaching component was tremendously valuable to him. "I think he helped me grow as a person. I had him to bounce ideas off. Superintendents often don't have that, and I found it extremely helpful to have someone like that. He is still a friend, and I still call on him."

Coaches also are careful to offer advice only when it is sought or in such a way that it is not perceived as advice, says Cowles, who coaches the Columbia County, Florida, team.

"My biggest contribution to that group has been to be a steadying force," she says. "I listen to them and offer suggestions to them when they don't even know that I'm offering suggestions. Most of the time people are not aware of how much it helps them to have somebody listen to them."

Lane, of Columbia County, says Cowles' assistance has been essential. "She's been an absolutely invaluable sounding board as an objective outside-the-district person to help us work through some of the challenges that our leadership team has faced. I think that is a critical

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element of the whole process. It's so nice to have somebody who is removed from the district, who has no vested interest in what's going on here other than that she cares about us."

Floyd Hall, veteran educator, former superintendent and coach of the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County, North Carolina, team, says team members often called him with a variety of concerns. "They would call me about job-related things and personal things. I know in one or two situations it was even something dealing with their families they wanted to talk over. I feel like we became very close," Hall says.

"The coaching and mentoring component was excellent," says Gentry of the Winston-Salem/Forsyth team. "We could not have asked for a better mentor. He was just fantastic. He was just what our team needed. I called upon him for some personal things. He kept us going, particularly when we were down on ourselves."

Wilhelm, also of Winston-Salem/Forsyth, says the coaching and mentoring component is "by far the most unusual aspect of the program." He adds, "You have to be very careful in an organization. You don't want your boss to get involved, but with the coaches you can ask 'Where did I mess up?' 'What are some possibilities I didn't consider?' Most of these coaches have been principals, superintendents, college professors. They've been down a lot of different roads."

PROFILE

AN INVALUABLE RESOURCE

Bill Anderson is a veteran school leader whose more than 30 years as a superintendent took him through just about every crisis any school leader can face. His experience, long-term perspective and objective approach have made him a valuable peer coach and mentor to three Leadership Academy teams.

It takes time, Anderson says, for a coach to build the trust necessary for the team to confide in him. He does not rush the process.

"For a coach to have any effect, the person has to be accepted as someone who is open and honest and will not attempt to interject his or her own feelings over theirs. The coach has to be a resource person. Otherwise nothing happens—like putting your finger in a glass of water then taking it out, and everything goes back to being just the way it was."

Anderson, like all peer coaches, holds meetings with his team in its district twice each year. He meets for one day with the team as a whole and then meets separately with individual team members. In individual meetings, Anderson discusses the participants' personal plans of improvement.

"I talk to members about their reflective journal entries to see if there is any common thread in the things they've picked out as being critical issues that they've dealt with. We determine if any of those issues relate to their individual action plan for growth and development. They discuss their private and professional areas of concern, whether it's matters of health or other things. It gives them a non-threatening, receptive ear, which in these times sometimes is hard to find."

The one-on-one meetings include the participant's suggestions for achieving the team's goals and an assessment of how the team is functioning. "I have them do that individually rather than collectively because there might be something that they are hesitant to share with the others regarding the team's work," he says.

During the team meeting, the discussion focuses on the district's goals. "As a team, we will review the roles and responsibilities that they last agreed upon, asking if those are still appropriate or if the role the team takes toward meeting these goals should be revised. It's all an effort to cause them to progress as individuals and as a team toward the accomplishment of those SREB goals. I function as a resource person to help them keep on track."

Team members guide each other across an alarmed rug in an exercise that demonstrates how good communication and group dynamics can help them meet goals.

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Building Community Collaboration: Partnerships for Improvement

To be successful, schools must address the human service needs that prevent students from succeeding. Schools alone can't solve these problems, but they can lead the effort to coordinate the work of public and private agencies in their communities that deliver services to children, with an emphasis on early intervention. The Leadership Academy offers a specific training module on how to build these collaboratives.

"Bringing together human service agencies within a community and sitting around a table and talking is just the beginning point," Crews says. "You have to identify children who come into this world in such deprived circumstances that if they don't get help early, when they get to the first grade, it's too late; you can't remediate them in 12 years. A community collaborative has to identify a specific child and a specific setting in which that child lives and develop an individualized support system for that child—and then stay with that child until he enters school and beyond."

With the Institute of Educational Leadership in Washington, DC, the

"The major problems that schools grapple with—child abuse and neglect, poverty, violence, and substance abuse—originate in the culture outside the schoolhouse. School, business and political leaders are recognizing that deep-seated societal ills injure children before they enter school. Even 12 years of school remediation efforts often fail."

Alton Crews

JUNE 15th

Another year has passed. Are we any closer to making our schools more competitive, more able to perform in the new world? I hear the comments that kids graduate who cannot read or write. These kids can [read], but can they think at the level needed for the future? I don't believe we are adapting fast enough. We have to do more, and we have to do it faster to meet the new demand. This is our/my challenge.

A central office staff member

SREB Leadership Academy developed its module on building human services collaboratives. During this training session, participants begin by reviewing the national "Kids Count" data, which provide social and demographic statistics for each county in every state. The module outlines two types of collaborations. One is advisory. The other is an active, hands-on cooperative that provides direct services. It includes the work of all agencies that are required to provide services to children and families.

"Forming a collaborative is tough for schools to do because they are not sure what their role is," Crews says. "The schools are reluctant to extend their services from age five down to age one. They don't want to take on that role, but the school has to be the catalyst in bringing these other agencies together."

This module is based on the philosophy that in the first two years of a child's life, the focus should be on ensuring that the child is nurtured physically and emotionally. The next three years should focus on building the support system that will bring a child to the schoolhouse steps with a reasonable chance for success.

"Because the schools are the focus of the community, they can help their communities see that when separate agencies, such as family and children's services, public health, housing, law enforcement, and juvenile courts work separately, they are not effectively or appropriately serving families," Crews says. "Each agency does its own thing. It has its own budget. It has its own mission. It has its own board. And their efforts are often futile and fragmented," he says.

Bringing these organizations together requires collaborative skills on the part of school leaders. Teams study ways to develop these community-based human service collaboratives and can include a human service provider on the team to help them begin a collaborative in their districts.

For one school district, participation in the Leadership Academy was the beginning of a significant community project. The Glynn County, Georgia district had set as one of its goals having all children ready for school. "We believe if we are going to make a difference, we can't rely on remediation," says Marijo Pitts-Sheffield. "We need to look at early intervention, the earlier the better. Our philosophy is pay now or pay later. We saw [the Leadership Academy] as an opportunity to go for that goal."

When the district began its participation in the Leadership Academy, it had no pre-kindergarten program. It now has 15 classes and serves nearly a third of the eligible population.

"The Leadership Academy provided direction and focus and the self-confidence we needed. We focused on our specific goal and channeled our training to meeting that goal. The leadership training, the risk-taking and the module on collaboration were directly applied to this goal. The Leadership Academy empowered us."

Pitts-Sheffield says her team was involved with the Leadership Academy at about the time that Georgia began providing funds for a pre-kindergarten program. "Since the Leadership Academy module on collaboration requires

that you look at how you work with your agencies, we were able to use data from our SREB participation to [apply for pre-kindergarten funding]. We were one of the first 20 sites that received funding. SREB provided the groundwork that we needed to meet the mandates of these new programs that require collaboration. [That Academy seminar] marked the first time I ever thought about collaboration."

Pitts-Sheffield says her district is still heavily involved in collaboration with human service agencies and has recently begun sharing funds among agencies. She adds that the collaboration project has experienced its share of "growing pains" regarding turf issues, but it has not derailed. Cooperation continues, she says.

"It helps when you can pick up a phone and be supportive of a family by just saying I'm sending so-and-so down [to another agency], and you have that trust between people. Before, [the other agencies] would have said Marijo who? What in the world does she want?"

In Winston-Salem/Forsyth County, North Carolina, an effort to establish cooperation among agencies is in the early stages. "One of the things we're trying to accomplish in our school system—that came out of the Leadership Academy—is to establish an educational summit with all the players in the community," Wilhelm says. "We duplicate a lot of services. We have our own nurses and social workers. Sometimes five different individuals are dealing with the same family and kids. We're trying to bring all the players—Head Start, human services, social services and juvenile justice—together and say 'Let's see if there's some way we can work as a team' to streamline services to families and kids."

The second type of collaboration included in the module is a community advisory or coordinating council that involves the business community, city councils or county commissions, civic groups and other active organizations within the community in school improvement programs. To help districts build this advisory council, teams participating in the Academy include a representative of the business community to serve as a technical adviser.

"You've got to have business organizations represented and government organizations represented," Crews says. The advisory or coordinating council is a partnership that guides the process of change and allows school leaders to share and build support for their ideas. This council can begin the process of building the hands-on human services collaborative.

"The community advisory input serves as an early warning [communications] line if there is a problem [in the community] that could abort a program before it gets off the ground," Crews says. "So many school systems run aground because they don't have any contacts out there to help them avoid problems."

In Columbia County, Florida, the business community is highly supportive of the district's participation in the Leadership Academy and is closely involved with many programs in the schools, Superintendent Lane says. A representative from the county's Chamber of Commerce is a member of the district's Leadership Academy team.

JANUARY 26th

In retrospect, after having moved the student, I feel I should have pushed harder to have the parent and teacher meet. On that day, at that time, I saw the situation as a "no win" matter for all involved. With the same options as before, I feel I would make a different call. I apologized to the teacher and explained the rationale for my decision. He deserved a chance to face those who did not agree with his teaching techniques.

A principal

PROFILE

FINDING THE LEADER WITHIN

At first, Brenda Gentry, instructional generalist from Winston-Salem/Forsyth County, North Carolina, was reluctant to participate in the Leadership Academy. She thought it was a great idea, but she was new in her position and had many other obligations.

"The first time I went [to a Leadership Academy session], I was not good company for anybody. But being able to meet with so many different people from around the South and sharing the same types of issues and problems—that was real powerful."

Gentry was captivated. "The presenters and much of the philosophy of leadership—even through I had been to graduate school and had some administrative training—was all new to me. I was the greenhorn and really excited about everything."

Through the leadership style assessment, Gentry learned that others perceived her to be a leader. "I never saw myself as being a leader. Or I never saw what I did as involving any kind of leadership skills, until I started with the SREB Academy."

She says the leadership assessment "really got me in touch with my leadership style and how other people perceived me. I got to see a different side of me."

She has become conscious of her leadership style and has learned how to change and adapt it as needed. "Before, I would just make a decision or say something, or I wouldn't make a decision. I didn't think that I was employing any particular style or that I was using avoidance or being overbearing. I never thought about any of that, but having gone through the assessment, I'm always reminded if I'm doing that."

Gentry says she would not have had the opportunity to develop her leadership skills if she had not attended the SREB Leadership Academy.

"I found my leadership style. I didn't know I had one. And I think that I've tried to fine-tune some things. I would attribute all of this awareness to my participation in the SREB Leadership Academy. I never would have decided to look inward."

"Involving the business community in buying into the goals has been a very, very positive part of the experience," she says. "Not only have we had our Chamber of Commerce director as part of our Leadership Academy team, but we have kept our chamber education committee apprised of the goals. It has become the most active chamber committee that we have in our community, and its interest is directly related to our participation in the Academy. They've been partners in several ways in doing things that are going to have long-term positive results for our kids."

Several Columbia County businesses have set up executive internships for college-bound students and apprentice programs for technical career students, Lane says. "It has made wonderful connections for the students too. Some of those businesses have given students jobs during Christmas and in the summer."

The local NationsBank has also supported the district's involvement in the Leadership Academy. NationsBank annually hosts a luncheon that offers the district an opportunity to provide a "state of the schools" report to the community. About 200 businesses attend each year, Lane says. NationsBank and the chamber education committee also have developed an "A-plus Awards for Excellence" program for businesses that are active in the schools. "All of this is directly related to the involvement of NationsBank and the Chamber and their commitment to what we're doing," Lane says.

Advancing School Leadership with a Comprehensive Approach

The strength of the SREB Leadership Academy lies in the interdependence of the four strategies and their relative impact upon individual participants, the teams, and ultimately the school systems and students. Each strategy of the program reinforces the others. The connection is critical.

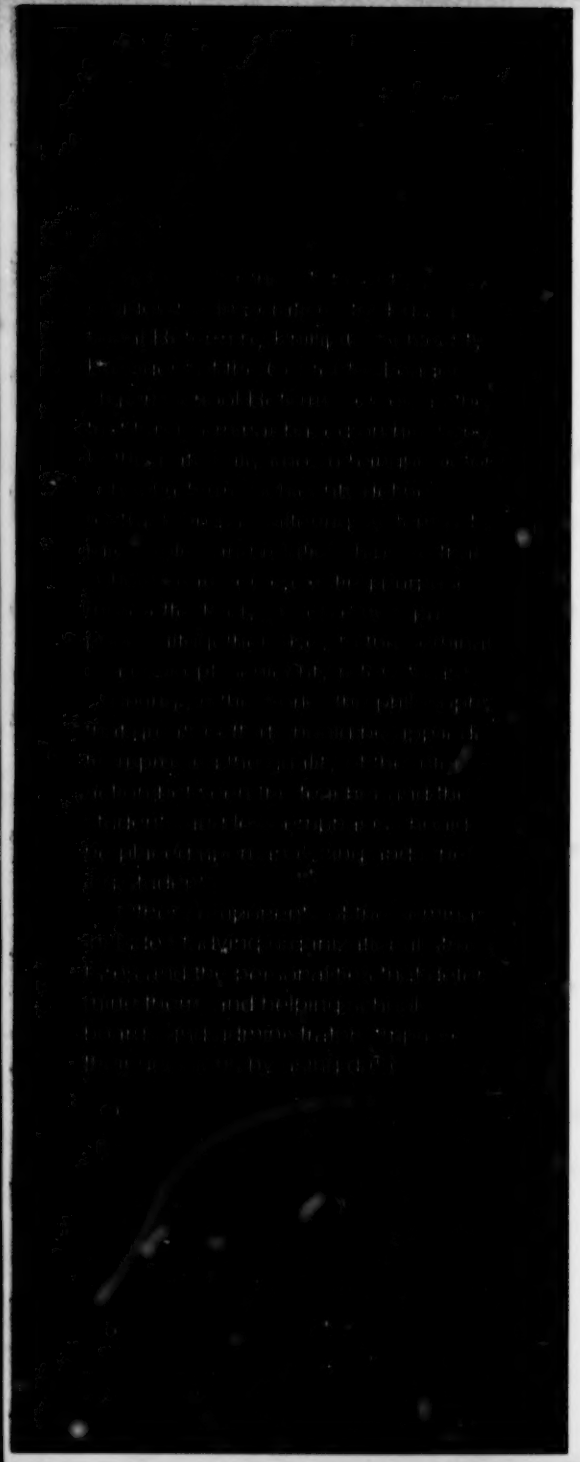
"The program is not a parachute drop, where you come in and there's no follow up," Coble says. "The combination of variables that went into the training, the actual on-site training, good trainers, the reflective learning journal and the mentor-coaching aspect were all woven together, moving toward establishing a worthwhile district goal. It was more focused and more tied together than other programs I've been a part of."

When educators of various responsibility levels and other individuals such as school board members, parents and business people work together within the same context, the process creates a climate for personal and professional change that leads to organizational change—and improved schools.

"Something has to happen to us personally before we are then able to join with a group and take action," says Cowles. "I believe this program has touched everyone [who participated] and that something similar to this is needed by every leadership team and school system to make a real commitment and impact in getting change and improvement from schools."

Compared to other continuing education programs he has attended, Lawson says the SREB program is "certainly better all the way around. It's an excellent approach. It's much more thorough. It's more all-encompassing. It's much more than just a one-shot, hit-and-miss approach. For most leadership programs, you go in for a two- or three-day session and that's the end of it. At SREB, with the reflective journal, with the coaching and with the three or four meetings a year, you have the continuity and interaction with other teams that you don't get in other programs."

"The hands-on experiences were invaluable," adds Symmonds. "The SREB Leadership Academy is 100 percent better than any other



continuing education program in which I have participated. In most programs that I've been to, you sit there and let them tell you how you should be doing things. This program gets us involved. There's no way you can sit through a session and not participate. That's certainly the way I learn—by doing rather than having somebody tell me how to do it."

Davis says the program exceeded his expectations. "During all my years in professional education—the background, the experience and the contact with other people around the country—it has been the strongest and most beneficial professionally to me, and to our district, of anything I've ever done."

The SREB Leadership Academy is not a prescription. It is a model offering four strategies that states can adapt and tailor to their needs. As educators in the SREB states face tough challenges, leadership training will help them find and pursue new ideas, new ways of thinking, new answers. Leaders can be trained to break through old patterns, but they cannot bring about change without the support of legislatures, state education departments and communities.

"Any school district is only as good as its leadership at the top," says Davis, who is now a district superintendent in another state. "That same thing is true in a [school] building; it is only as good as the vision and the expertise of its principal. Every class is only as good as the vision and expertise of its teacher. It's a pyramid. The superintendent has to set a vision for the school district, and that has a direct impact on the students."

Some states have already begun to adopt the SREB program or to develop similar programs. In Georgia, the Next Generation Schools project involves more than 150 school leaders from 13 school systems in the Leadership Academy's concepts. Feedback from this project has refined and strengthened the SREB program.

In Winston-Salem/Forsyth County, North Carolina, the district's participation in the Leadership Academy inspired it to set up its own leadership program, called LAP, for Leadership Academy Program, says team member Jim Wilhelm. The two-year program (LAP1 and LAP2) uses the basic strategies of the SREB Academy. New administrators, including principals, assistant principals and central office staff, attend a three-hour LAP session at least once a month.

Benefits of leadership development provided through programs such as the SREB Leadership Academy are not always limited to participating districts. Educators who attend the program and later move to other districts carry with them the skills and insights they develop through the training. "What I did at the Leadership Academy and what I learned there I brought here," Davis says, "and I'm sure other superintendents who have moved on are doing the same thing. The seed has been planted, and we're scattering the seeds again."

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AFTERWORD

A Look Back, A Look Forward

For almost two decades, states in the SREB region have been engaged in a quest to improve schools. Regrettably, the "silver bullet" to cure all education's ills, perceived or real, has eluded most school reformers. There is no one best strategy.

Schooling is a complex, multifaceted enterprise. The 3,000 school systems in the SREB region do not lend themselves to centralized authority or highly regulated procedures.

A new school improvement strategy is now emerging. States and the federal government are shifting educational funding and reform strategies to the local school districts. The trend is to decentralize, deregulate and downsize state agencies while empowering local communities to plan their own school improvement. Most SREB states are searching for ways to balance state prescriptions and local autonomy. Educators and local communities face the challenges of guaranteeing equity to all children, meeting state achievement standards and including parents and the business community in its decision-making process.

These challenges will require a new kind of leadership at both the state and local levels. Leaders will need to share authority and work in teams.

From whence will these new leaders come? Are they already in place, just waiting for the chance to prove themselves? Or will states need to prepare teachers, principals, school board members, superintendents and central office staff to assume new, more complex roles?

SREB believes that leadership training is an essential element in the continuing effort to improve schools. But we also believe that state policy makers and legislators have assigned a low priority to preparing school leaders. Many states have not exhibited much enthusiasm for supporting leadership development; they have been looking for a quick fix to cure the problems of public schools. Developing school leaders calls for sustained support from legislatures and state policy makers.

Have you ever known of a superior school system or an exemplary local school that didn't have strong leadership?

If leadership skills can be taught and learned, let us be about this important task.

Alton C. Crews, Director
SREB Leadership Academy

Appendix 1: Leadership Academy Teams and Participants

CLASS I (1991-1995)

GLYNN COUNTY (Brunswick), Georgia

Jeff Weaver, Superintendent (1991-1994)

David Mosley, Superintendent (1994-present)

Gerry Egger, Elementary Principal

Marijo Pitts-Sheffield, Early Childhood Specialist

Rhonda Jordon, Kindergarten Teacher

Kath O'Keefe, Coordinator of Language Arts

Robert Saunders, Peer Coach, Former Dean of Education, Memphis State University, Former Assistant Dean of Education, Auburn University

WINSTON-SALEM/FORSYTH COUNTY (Winston-Salem) North Carolina

Larry Coble, Superintendent (1991-1994)

Don Martin, Superintendent (1995-present)

Jim Wilhelm, Division Director of High Schools

John C. Jessup, Division Director of Personnel Services

Toni Bigham, Division Director of Elementary Schools

Brenda Gentry, Elementary Teaching Specialist

Floyd Hall, Peer Coach, Former Superintendent, Greenville, South Carolina Schools, Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy, University of South Carolina

RICHLAND COUNTY DISTRICT ONE (Columbia), South Carolina

John Stevenson, Superintendent (1991-1994)

Dr. Willis McLeod, Superintendent (1994-present)

Lily White, Elementary School Principal

Frank Melonas, High School Math Teacher

Carol Lee, School Board Member (former)

Denise Kelly, Community Representative and Parent

Lon Crim, Peer Coach, Former Superintendent, Atlanta City Schools, Professor of Educational Leadership, Georgia State University and Spellman College

CARROLLTON-FARMERS BRANCH ISD (Carrollton-Farmers Branch), Texas

B. L. Davis, Superintendent (1991-1993)

Monte Sriver, Superintendent (1993-present)

Nancy Barker, Director of Elementary Education

Annissa Jackson, Kindergarten Teacher

Adriana Gomez, Elementary School Principal

Linda Taylo · School Board Member

William Anderson, Peer Coach, Former Superintendent, Des Moines, Iowa, Former Professor of Educational Leadership, Iowa State University

CLASS II (1993-1997)

COLUMBIA COUNTY (Lake City), Florida

Dianne Lane, Superintendent

Glenn Hunter, School Board Member

Barbara Thomas, Director of Elementary Education

Charlotte Adams, District Volunteer/ Marketing Education Coordinator

Bobby Simmons, Elementary School Principal

Jim Poole, Executive Director, Chamber of Commerce

Tonita Orr, Teen Pregnancy Program Teacher

Milly Cowles, Peer Coach, Dean Emeritus of Education, University of Alabama - Birmingham

SPARTANBURG COUNTY DISTRICT THREE (Spartanburg), South Carolina

Evalyn Jerkins, Superintendent

Reggie Hill, Community Representative

Harvey Dailey, High School Principal

Don Camby, Assistant High School Principal

Gary Barnard, High School Guidance Counselor

Bonnie Rogers, High School Science Teacher

Marian Loadholdt, High School English Teacher

Luther Rogers, Peer Coach, Assistant Director, Florida Superintendents' Association, Retired Director of the Florida Department of Education Leadership Academy

TEMPLE ISD (Temple), Texas

Jack Reeves, Superintendent

Bill Lawson, High School Principal

Beth Mackey, School Board Member

Julia Symmonds, School Board Chair

Larry Wilkerson, Community Leader Representative

Armando Henriquez, Peer Coach, Former Superintendent, Key West, Florida

NEWPORT NEWS SCHOOL DISTRICT (Newport News), Virginia

Eric Smith, Superintendent

Peter D. Bender, Elementary School Principal

Mattie Broadnax, Assistant High School Principal

Susan A. Piland, Director of Staff Development

Vivian Walker, Elementary Teacher in the Sixth Grade Gifted Program

William Anderson, Peer Coach, Former Superintendent, Des Moines, Iowa, Former Professor of Educational Leadership, Iowa State University

CLASS III (1995-2000)

AUBURN CITY SCHOOLS
(Auburn), Alabama

Team One

Anita Hardin, Interim Superintendent

Carol Pittard, School Board Member

Cheryl Patten, Elementary School Principal

Clima White, Middle School Principal

Martha Shepherd, Guidance Counselor

Lynne Patrick, Assistant Elementary School Principal

Debbie Smith, Elementary School Principal

Floyd Hall, Peer Coach, Former Superintendent, Greenville City Schools, South Carolina, Former Professor of Education and Policy, University of South Carolina at Greenville

Team Two

Ferne Garrett, Associate Superintendent

Suzanne Freeman, Elementary School Principal

Lynda Tremaine, Second Grade Teacher

Charles Tarver, Junior High Principal

Juanita Pierce, Elementary School Principal

Susan Hosemann, High School Principal

Floyd Hall, Peer Coach, Former Superintendent, Greenville City Schools, South Carolina, Former Professor of Education and Policy, University of South Carolina at Greenville.

VICKSBURG/WARREN SCHOOLS
(Vicksburg), Mississippi

Robert Pickett, Superintendent

Jim Moore, Deputy Superintendent

Karen Burke, Director of Special Projects

George Knox, Elementary School Principal

Edward Wong, High School U.S. History Teacher

Howell Gage, School Board Member

Luther Rogers, Peer Coach, Assistant Director, Florida Superintendents' Association, Retired Director of the Florida Department of Education Leadership Academy

YSLETA ISD (El Paso), Texas

Anthony Trujillo, Superintendent

Manny Soto, Jr., Associate Superintendent

Alicia Parra, Director of Staff Development

Lionel Nava, High School Principal

Lydia Almeida, Elementary Science Mentor Teacher

William Anderson, Peer Coach, Former Superintendent, Des Moines, Iowa, Former Professor of Educational Leadership, Iowa State University

ROANOKE CITY SCHOOLS
(ROANOKE), VIRGINIA

Wayne Harris, Superintendent

Rita Bishop, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction and Learning Organizations

Heather Simmons, Middle School Principal

Faye Claytor-Wood, Elementary School Principal

Nelson Harris, School Board Chair

Eddie West, Peer Coach, Former Superintendent, Wilmington, North Carolina

Appendix 2: Program Evaluation

Evaluation of the SREB Leadership Academy is conducted through four measurement processes, both objective and subjective.

Progress toward the goals—All of the goals set by participating school systems were benchmarked at the beginning of the program and at intervals throughout the program. Progress toward achieving them is documented for each school system as a means of evaluating the program's success.

Leadership style assessment—The change in each individual participant's leadership style also indicates the success of the program. Each participant undergoes an assessment at the beginning and end of the program. Progress toward the "Effective Leader Profile" as measured by the assessment tool is documented.

Participation level—Because the extent of each team and individual's participation is key to how much the program stimulates school change, all participants complete an extensive survey of their work with the Academy. For example, they are asked to list the number of seminars they attended, journal entries they wrote, team meetings held and private interviews with the peer coach. This instrument, developed with the help of Georgia Institute of Technology researchers, measures participation level and enables program administrators to gauge the Academy's effectiveness.

Team interviews and written evaluations—Team interviews are conducted as each class completes the program. Participants also will be asked to complete a written evaluation form.

Appendix 3: Project Administration

The SREB/NationsBank Leadership Academy demonstration project is guided by an 11-member oversight committee of business, legislative and education leaders from the SREB region. This committee monitors progress and provides direction. It also assists in project evaluation.

Alton C. Crews, a school superintendent for more than 30 years in Alabama, South Carolina and Georgia, where he most recently served as Gwinnett County superintendent for 12 years, directs the Leadership Academy. While in Gwinnett County, he established one of the region's most comprehensive training systems for school administrators.

Frances Mullis, assistant to the director of the Leadership Academy, gathered information key to the preparation of this report.

Lety Jones and James Torrence were instrumental in preparing and publishing the report. Beth Giddens provided editing and photographs.

Wise Marketing & Design of Atlanta, Georgia, designed and produced the report.

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